

Razorback Scheme

American Postal Workers Union • Fayetteville Arkansas Local 667

October-November 2014

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Ike Mills, Local President

Well, first of all [since this newsletter's focus is supposed to be about the newly converted PSEs], I guess a great big **CONGRATULATIONS** is in order. I am proud of all of you for sticking it out and making it to career status. There are a lot of changes for you all, and if you have any questions, grab one of us and ask away. Remember that if we are on-the-clock, ask your supervisor for steward time first so neither one of us gets scolded. Pretty soon you'll be experts and teaching a new group of employees the ropes. Enjoy your careers and let us know if you need help in any way. That is why we are here.

I guess the second big issue is elections. We just sent out ballots for the merger issue and had pretty poor participation – 110 ballots were mailed out and only 40 of them were returned. I hope we have better response with the current election when ballots will be mailed this week.

Please read the candidates' statements in this newsletter and participate in the election.

And when you vote, **please read the instructions** and **follow them** so that your vote counts. It is silly to take the time to vote and then to not have it count because it is considered a "spoiled

ballot" due to the member not doing the ballot and envelopes correctly – as instructed.

Thank you for your participation, and I wish the best to all of those running for a position.

FAYETTEVILLE VOTES TO ACCEPT MERGER WITH ROGERS LOCAL

The Fayetteville Local voted 30 to 4 to accept the merger of the Rogers Local into the Fayetteville Local. Unfortunately, out of 40 received, 6 ballots were done incorrectly and thus declared invalid. For example, 4 were sent in envelopes unsigned [in place indicated] and 2 failed to insert their ballots into the OFFICIAL BALLOT ENVELOPE and seal as instructed. A sample ballot with instructions is printed in this newsletter for you to examine. Please read the instructions and follow them. And remember to **VOTE!** Ballots must be received by Sunday, November 16th, the upcoming meeting date. **And VOTE November 4th in the General Election!**



New Career Clerks just converted from PSEs:

L. to R. – Aaron Parsons, Jeremiah Muckleroy, Kyle Mayville (back), Chris Mantia (front), Reed Aichi, Dale Kholos, Laura Pharis, and Kris Davis

The *RAZORBACK SCHEME* is the official voice of the Fayetteville APWU Local. However, opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual writers and not necessarily those of the APWU, Local, officials or Editor. Articles, artwork, cartoons and/or other material are solicited from member readers who wish to share their views. Although freedom of the press is recognized, contributors are exhorted not to submit derogatory material about any fellow union member or to submit any false or unsubstantiated allegation concerning management or any other individual inside or outside this organization. All letters must be signed (if hard-copied) or emailed via an identifiable, recognized screen name and are requested to have been received by the Editor ten (10) days prior to the announced publication date. Names will be withheld upon request. Send submissions to *RAZORBACK SCHEME*, P.O. Box 654, Fayetteville AR 72702; or email to Editor's screen name listed below or on website. Submissions may be returned upon request.

OFFICERS

President.....Royce D. "Ike" Mills
Vice-President.....Vinny Dachille
Financial Secretary.....Jim Jacobs
Recording Secretary.....Sonya Kirsch
Editor-Publisher.....Loren Adams

STEWARDS – ALTERNATES

Chief Steward.....Ike Mills
Tour One.....Jeremiah Muckleroy
Tour Two.....Cheryl Wing
Tour Three.....Vinny Dachille
Maintenance.....Tony Crowsey

Safety Representative.....Nancy Sramek
Webmaster.....Jake Lamkins

NEXT UNION MEETING:

Sunday, November 16, 2014
Jim's Razorback Pizza – 1:00 pm

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FALL IS FINALLY HERE!

This is the busiest time of our year. Catalogs have already started pouring in and parcel volume has started to pick up [thanks to our customers who are getting a jump on Christmas]. Thankfully, Linda is back from her knee surgery and we have three new PSE's. So welcome aboard Lana, Pat and Amber.

While Linda was off for her surgery, her father lost his battle with cancer. He had been in this battle for a while, and it has been heartbreaking for both Linda and her family. So, let us keep Linda and her family in our thoughts and prayers as they continue to deal with this loss.

We have seen some improvement on the overtime issues that we were having at both offices. Clerks on the overtime desired list are no longer working over 12 hours a day or 60 hours in a week. The only thing that I'm seeing is the constant use of non-OTDLs for overtime. We have 2 clerks at each station who are working their day off every week or working overtime every day. I thought (that was probably my mistake) that with the hiring of the PSEs, this would stop. We have 2 vacant positions on Dickson St. So you would think (there I go again) that 2 of our new PSEs would be used to cover those times. Then use the other two PSEs to cover days-off or the 2 or 3 hours that the non-OTDLs have been working. So, there is obviously still some tweaking to do. So, if you see anything that I need to be aware of, let me know and I will keep doing my part.

There has also been a question about concurrent overtime. The working of non-OTDLs into overtime alongside OTDLs without maxing out the OTDL clerk. We run into this a lot on tour 2. Part of the issue is the differences in everyone's actual tour hours. It seems that everyone has different start and end times. The times that the overtime would be needed is when everyone is already at work. For example, if the non-OTDL is getting to the end of their tour but they need help with dispatch or window, but the OTDL clerk is already there working, then how can the OTDL do two jobs? They can't. It would be wonderful if we could get management to pay the OTDL clerk for four hours of work after the job is already done, but I'm afraid I'd get laughed out of the meeting. If you can come up with something I'm not seeing, let me know. I'll be happy to file the grievance. It's my policy.

I'm going to leave you with this. When I was a supervisor at Dickson Street many years ago, one of the rural carriers lost her husband very suddenly. When I was at his funeral, one of the other rural carriers asked why our postmaster hadn't come. We had just been through a long string of OICs (we called them 90-day wonders). This was the first "real" Postmaster we had in a very long time. I made some excuse for him. *He was out of town. He had a meeting in Little Rock.* You know, whatever came to mind at the time, but I made sure that I told the Postmaster the next day that he had been missed. He responded to me that the employees were not our friends; they were employees. I was on my way to Linda's father's funeral (running late as usual). When I got a call from Ike, he was already standing outside the funeral home wanting to know where I was. My point: I am thankful that our Local President is conscientious in attending important life-events in members' lives – not just filing grievances or interpreting contractual issues.

I agree that the democratic process must go forward in a fair and balanced manner, but at the same time I want to express my gratitude for the hard work put in by our present and past officers who've led our Local through all these trying years.

– Cheryl Wing, Tour 2 Steward

CANDIDATES FOR LOCAL PRESIDENT

ANDREW HEYD'S STATEMENT:

My name is Andrew Heyd and I'm running for President of Local 667. For those of you who don't know me, I have been a clerk for nearly 16 years. I first started in Mandeville, Louisiana in 1999. After Hurricane Katrina, I relocated to NW Arkansas in 2006. I have acted as a steward in both Fayetteville and Mandeville offices.

Some of you may wonder why [after all these years] I am running for President - especially since Loren (Adams) had tried to get me to run several times years before. The answer is simple; and you, the membership, deserve an honest one. I believe myself and other clerks were treated unfairly due to a failure to follow the contract.

It's like when I first came to this office. I was steward in Mandeville for many years. When I came to this office (Fayetteville) the last thing I wanted to do was act as a steward again. Well, it didn't take me long to assume the role as steward on Tour 1. I took the job because I saw how so many were treated unfairly because of a failure to follow contract.

Another reason I am putting my name forward for candidacy is concern due to upcoming contract negotiations. Once we have a new National Agreement (hopefully in May of 2015) our local negotiations will commence. I want to ensure our local union and the membership's rights and needs are duly represented over that of management's.

In conclusion, I would like to thank each of you for reading my article and the articles of my fellow candidates. And I would like to encourage you, the membership, to participate in this election. As a final remark, as we approach this holiday season, remember your loved ones and please be safe on the roads.

– Andrew Heyd, Candidate for Local President

IKE MILLS' STATEMENT:

Well, folks, here we are deciding who is going to be our Local Officers for the next two years. I am not going to waste any time on negative comments. All I can hope is that the work that I have done for this Local [in the four years that I have been here] will speak for itself. I always strive to make the right decisions based on the contract and what is morally right. I know not everyone agrees with that, but that is part of this job. If I am reelected to the position of President, I will continue to represent each of you to the best of my ability in an honest and professional way – as I have always done for the past 20 years. I ask for your support and your votes if you feel I have done the job you have elected me to do. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to ask me.

Thank you, and I wish you all the best.

– Ike Mills, Candidate for Local President

CANDIDATES FOR LOCAL VICE-PRESIDENT

TED SMITH'S STATEMENT:

First I would like to thank Rabecca for the nomination. I accept this nomination because I do believe in the power our union (APWU). It has proven to be dedicated to the protection and fair wages for all. I believe the Fayetteville Local can be a strong and effective force if we all become united in the cause. I have been involved with the APWU since 2000, I was chief steward of my previous local for seven years. Dealing with management can sometime be hard but I believe I have the passion and fortitude to keep the fight. The fight is for our jobs and safe working environment. I ask for your vote for the chance to represent you in this cause.

UNITED IN SOLIDARITY!

– Ted Smith, Candidate for Local Vice-President

VINCENT DACHILLE'S STATEMENT:

My name is Vincent Dachille and I would like to thank you for allowing me to serve as your Vice-President for the last two years. I am running again for the same position in this upcoming election, and ballots should be in your mailbox very soon. My goals if reelected are to continue to provide a clear, calm voice as I advise the president in all matters and to attempt to provide greater transparency to the members; we work for you. I plan to try my hand at doing my own Step 2 grievances to make the process quicker. I also wish to learn window issues better. I have been an automation clerk for 17 years. Those issues I know. Put me on a window and I have no idea. I do all this because I enjoy helping people with their problems, and I really get annoyed when management takes advantage of employees. We live in scary times to work for the Post Office – as many of you know who have transferred in from AMPed Post Offices. We need to pull together and have cohesive union leadership to fight these battles, and I feel that I could be a valuable asset to help. Thank you for your time, and even if you don't vote for me, vote in general.

I was on the committee that counted the votes for the Rogers consolidation and we had many issues with some of the returned ballots, These were the issues we had: Make sure you (1) Sign the outside envelope in the spot provided; (2) Put the ballot card into the little envelope that says **Official Ballot Envelope**; and (3) Seal all envelopes. If you do not do this, your vote doesn't count and is invalid. Thanks again.

– Vinny Dachille, Candidate for Local Vice-President

NEXT MEETING: Sunday, November 16th at 1:00 pm, Jim's Razorback Pizza off Highway 62 W (MLK Blvd) near I-49 interchange. Ballots will be counted, T-shirts & plans discussed for annual Christmas Party. Please be there! Drawing for \$50 door prize. Cheese breadsticks and soft drinks on the house. Union Meetings are both interesting and fun!

INSTRUCTIONS

This election is for **Local President** and **Local Vice-President**. The candidates' names are listed on the front of the ballot preceded by a square for you to indicate your choice.

On the ballot please mark the square adjacent to your choice for officer with a check or diagonal line or an "X". Then insert the ballot into the **OFFICIAL BALLOT ENVELOPE** and seal it. Next, place the **OFFICIAL BALLOT ENVELOPE** into the stamped envelope addressed to the Fayetteville Local. Do not mark or sign on the **OFFICIAL BALLOT ENVELOPE**. Ballots and the **OFFICIAL BALLOT ENVELOPE** **MUST NOT** be signed or marked in any way. However, do sign the stamped envelope [addressed to the Local] in the upper left hand corner and include your current mailing address. Next, don't forget to mail in your ballot.

The Local prefers mail-in ballots. However, ballots received on or before the meeting date (**Sunday, November 16, 2014**) that are properly sealed and signed will be counted.

Ballots will be counted at the Meeting on Sunday, November 16, 2014.

OFFICIAL BALLOT



PRESIDENT:

- Andrew Heyd
- Ike Mills

VICE-PRESIDENT:

- Vincent Dachille
- Ted Smith

Remember Why the Bathroom is in a Different Location Than the Kitchen

I know we ask a lot of our union. We also don't know all that goes on in the grievance process. We all have our idea of what should happen. But when you add management to the equation, it's far from a perfect system.

We must keep in mind that we will need to have new and younger members step up and take over the union, but also remember to do it in a way to keep a good working relationship with the prior officers and to honor and learn from their wisdom and experience. If we ignore this, we are doomed to repeat our past failures over and over again and that's when we lose the war. I believe this myself because I'm still learning and it's not as easy or simple as it may look from outside of the steward or officer's perspective.

I am pleased at the past meeting. All current and new candidates agreed that there will be no dirty politics. It is all based on who they are, what they can bring to the table and why they want to run for the office.

I personally would like to see a type of internship of a few months of working side-by-side instead of a hand-off. I can see this happening here because there may be differing opinions, but we are all willing to work together.

Also, remember this is a type of give-and-take relationship; we can't expect management to roll over and give us all we desire, and we won't roll over either. It takes the combination of compromise and consistency to create a good working environment. If we push to the point of pissing management off, I'm sure they will react and treat us adversely – it's human nature. This is why we need a measure of wisdom at times in some of these battles. Remember why the bathroom is in a different location than the kitchen... **“Don't poop where you eat; it ain't healthy.”**

– Tony Crowsey, Maintenance Steward

In Sympathy – To Linda Almendinger on the loss of her Father, to Christy Devick on the loss of her Mother, and to Stacey Starr on the loss of her Mother. Our thoughts & prayers are with all of you.